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THE FIRST BIENNIAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF NEGRO LIFE AND HISTORY AT WASHINGTON

There is no fixed rule to determine exactly where the meetings of the Association shall be held. The constitution grants this power to the Executive Council. Washington, however, naturally proved attractive for the reasons that it is located mid-way between the North and the South, the Association is incorporated under laws of the District of Columbia, and several of its officers reside there. The extensive advertising given the meeting and the occurrence of the conference in Washington on the education of the Negro the following day brought to the meeting probably the largest number of useful and scholarly Negroes ever assembled at the national capital. Among these were: President Nathan B. Young, Mr. W. T. B. Williams, President Byrd Prillerman, Dr. C. V. Roman, Prof. George E. Haynes, Mr. Monroe N. Work, President W. J. Hale, Dean Benjamin G. Brawley, Bishop I. N. Ross, Prof. J. R. Hawkins, Mr. R. P. Hamlin, Mr. C. H. Tobias, and Mr. A. L. Jackson. The meeting was further honored with the presence of some of the most useful and distinguished white persons in the country, namely: Mrs. Louis F. Post, the wife of the Assistant Secretary of Labor; Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones, Educational Expert of the United States Bureau of Education; Dr. James H. Dillard, Director of the John F. Slater Fund; Mr. George Foster Peabody, the New York banker; and Mr. Julius Rosenwald, the well-known philanthropist.

The morning session proved to be the most interesting of all. The introductory address was delivered by Dr. J. E. Moorland, the Secretary-Treasurer, who, in the absence of the President, presided throughout the meeting. In his remarks Dr. Moorland gave a brief account of what the Association had undertaken and endeavored to show how im-

portant the work is and how successfully it is being prosecuted under tremendous difficulties. He paid a high tribute to the Director of Research and Editor as the one who has done most of the work and contributed most of the money to finance the movement.

Mr. Monroe N. Work then read a very carefully prepared and illuminating paper on "The Negro and the World War." Taking a world-wide view of the great struggle, Mr. Work discussed the social, economic and political roots of the war as it concerns the black race and explained how the interests of these people connect with the upheaval in all its ramifications. As Dr. R. R. Wright, Jr., was unavoidably absent, all the time allowed for the discussion of the paper was given to Prof. George E. Haynes. Basing his remarks on the actual facts of the migration of the Negroes to the North, Professor Haynes spoke of the war as a rejuvenating and regenerating factor in enabling the Negro to know his possibilities and to come into his own.

Dr. C. G. Woodson followed Mr. Work, making a clear statement as to the meaning of the movement to study Negro life and history and setting forth the plans to save the records of the black race that the Negro may not, like the Indian, leave no written account of his thoughts, feelings, aspirations, and achievements. Dr. Woodson went into detail to explain how necessary it is to have trained investigators to undertake this work immediately, before it is too late, as many valuable documents bearing on the Negro are being destroyed for the reason that persons now possessing them do not know their value and the facilities for collection of such materials now afforded are inadequate. This topic was further discussed by Dr. C. V. Roman and Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones. Dr. Roman restricted his remarks largely to a definition of civilization to determine whether or not the Negro has made any contribution to it. After speaking of certain achievements of the Negro he deplored the fact that not only the white people but the Negroes themselves know very little about what their race has contributed to the progress of mankind. Dr. Jones spoke of

how important it is for a race to know and write its own history, for because of race prejudice, a man of one race cannot easily tell the truth about one of another. He then expressed his deep interest in the work and lauded the enterprise of those who are prosecuting it.

Probably the most interesting features of the morning session, however, were the brief addresses of Mr. George Foster Peabody, Mr. Julius Rosenwald, and Mr. James H. Dillard. Mr. Peabody expressed his delight at seeing such an important work undertaken and urged cooperation as the only successful way of carrying it on. He took occasion, also, to speak of his general interest in the Negro and his belief in his ultimate success. Mr. Julius Rosenwald referred to the time when he received a copy of the first issue of the JOURNAL OF NEGRO HISTORY and how it so impressed him that he decided to contribute one hundred dollars to its support every quarter. He believes that this magazine of standard scientific stamp, published in the interest of the propagation of the truth concerning the Negro, will be another means of helping him onward and upward. Dr. James H. Dillard spoke of the importance of studying Africa, mentioning several books which are so informing to him that the far-off continent seems to be an unexplored land of wonders. He maintained that largely through the study of the history of one's race one can have high ideals, without which there can be no actual progress.

The business session was looked forward to as an important one, as interested members were anxious to know what the Association had done during the first two years of its history. As there was no unfinished business, new business was in order. The chairman appointed Professor Kelly Miller, Dean Benjamin G. Brawley and Mr. M. N. Work as the committee on nominations and Mr. A. L. Jackson, Prof. George E. Haynes and Dr. Thomas J. Jones as an auditing committee. The most important business was amending the constitution, the changes of which having been previously sanctioned by a majority of the members of the

Executive Council, they were duly ratified by the Association. This constitution follows.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF NEGRO LIFE AND HISTORY

I

The name of this body shall be the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History.

II

Its object shall be the collection of sociological and historical documents and the promotion of studies bearing on the Negro.

III

Any person approved by the Executive Council may become a member by paying \$1.00 and after the first year may continue a member by paying an annual fee of one dollar. Persons paying \$2.00 annually become both active members of the Association and subscribers to the JOURNAL OF NEGRO HISTORY. On the payment of \$30.00, any person may become a life member, exempt from assessments. Persons not resident in the United States may be elected honorary members and shall be exempt from payment of assessments. Members organized as clubs for the study of the Negro shall gratuitously receive from the Director such instruction in this field as may be given by mail.

IV

The Officers of this Association shall be a President, a Secretary-Treasurer, a Director of Research and Editor, and an Executive Council, consisting of the three foregoing officers and twelve others elected by the Association. The Association shall elect three members of the Executive Council as trustees. It shall also appoint a business committee to certify bills and to advise the Director in matters of administrative nature. These officers shall be elected by ballot through the mail or at each biennial meeting of the Association.

V

The President and Secretary-Treasurer shall perform the duties usually devolving on such officers. The Director of Research and Editor shall devise plans for the collection of documents, direct the studies of members and determine what matter shall be published in the JOURNAL. The Executive Council shall have charge of the general interests of the Association, including the election of members, the calling of meetings, the collection and disposition of funds.

VI

This CONSTITUTION may be amended at any biennial meeting, notice of such amendment having been given at the previous biennial meeting or the proposed amendment having received the approval of the Executive Council.

Then the Director followed by the Secretary-Treasurer, with a financial statement, made this report:

The Association was organized in Chicago, September 9, 1915, by five persons who felt that something effective should be done to direct attention to the long-neglected work of saving the records of the Negro race. At first, it was thought best to call a national meeting to form an organization. This plan was abandoned, however, for the reason that it was not believed that a large number of persons would pay any attention to the movement until an actual demonstration as to the possibilities of the field had been made. The Director, therefore, had these few persons join him in organizing, so to speak, in a corner and proceeded at once to bring out the JOURNAL OF NEGRO HISTORY. How it was received by the public is now a matter of history.

The growth of the JOURNAL has been more than was expected. The first edition was 1,500, the second 1,300, the third 1,000, the fourth 2,000. At the end of 1916 the demand for back numbers so increased that it soon became evident that the editions were not large enough and that the back numbers would have to be reprinted. One thousand copies of volume I, and some extra numbers of it were accordingly reprinted and the current edition was increased to 4,000. The total circulation of the JOURNAL is 2,830. The subscription list shows 1,430 subscribers, about 400 copies are sold at newstands, 1,000 copies are used for promotion, and about 1,000 copies are kept on hand for future subscribers.

These achievements, however, have been due to sacrifice both of time and means. The Director has had to work under tremendous difficulties, but he has never lost faith in his coworkers and believes in the ultimate triumph of the cause. The problem has been threefold, that of research, that of editing and that of promotion.

As the Association has not had adequate funds to provide the Director with an office force or sufficient stenographic assistance, he has too often found himself in the position of having to do all things at one time. But in spite of these handicaps there was a gradual increase in the number of subscribers and contributors until unfortunately the income from these sources was greatly diminished by the war. A few substantial friends, however, have helped us when seemingly at our extremity. Among the more important contributions obtained are: \$75 from Dr. R. E. Park, \$100 from the Phelps-Stokes Fund, \$100 from Mr. Jacob H. Schiff, \$200 from Mr. Harold H. Swift, \$500 from Mr. Julius Rosenwald and \$1,000 from Dr. C. G. Woodson. We have, therefore, been able to come to the end of the first two years of our history free from debt and with a considerable balance on the right side of the ledger as is attested by the following financial statement of the Secretary-Treasurer:

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE
STUDY OF NEGRO LIFE AND HISTORY, FROM OCTOBER 14, 1915, TO
SEPTEMBER 9, 1917, INCLUSIVE

<i>Receipts</i>		<i>Expenditures</i>	
Bound Volumes and Subscriptions.....	\$1,216.39	Printing and Stationery....	\$2,993.32
Life and Active Memberships.....	512.75	Petty Cash.....	603.59
Contributions and Advertising.....	1,800.05	Stenographic Services.....	254.16
News Agents.....	222.84	Rent and Light.....	81.00
Loans.....	296.50	Bond.....	10.00
		Total Expenses.....	\$3,942.07
		Balance on hand.....	106.46
Total Receipts.....	\$4,048.53		\$4,048.53

Respectfully submitted,

J. E. MOORLAND,
Secretary-Treasurer.

When the time came for the election of officers, Professor Kelly Miller, the chairman of the committee on nominations, reported a list of names for the various positions. The name of Dr. G. C. Hall, President of the Association, was, at his request, omitted. Thereupon, Dr. C. G. Woodson and Dr. J. E. Moorland expressed regret that Dr. Hall desired to retire and paid him high tributes as a co-worker without whom the work could not have been made so successful. The Association then voted that the Secretary-Treasurer be instructed to cast its unanimous ballot for the persons nominated. These officers are: R. E. Park, President; J. E. Moorland, Secretary-Treasurer; C. G. Woodson, Director of Research and Editor, and, with the foregoing officers, Julius Rosenwald, Chicago, Illinois; George Foster Peabody, Saratoga Springs, New York; James H. Dillard, Charlottesville, Virginia; John R. Hawkins, Washington, D. C.; R. E. Jones, New Orleans, Louisiana; Thomas Jesse Jones, Washington, D. C.; A. L. Jackson, Chicago, Illinois; Sir Edmund Walker, Toronto, Canada; Moorefield Storey, Boston, Massachusetts; and J. G. Phelps Stokes, New York City, as members of the Executive Council. R. E. Park, J. E. Moorland and C. G. Woodson were appointed trustees and Thomas Jesse Jones, L. Hollingsworth Wood and J. E. Moorland as the business com-

mittee. Mr. A. L. Jackson, the chairman of the auditing committee, read the report certifying that the books of the Secretary-Treasurer had been properly kept and all moneys accounted for. Mr. Jackson took occasion, also, to point out the fact that in addition to taking upon himself the burden of editing the JOURNAL OF NEGRO HISTORY, Dr. Woodson gives more than half of the amount received as contributions to maintain it.

Several suggestions were offered for the good of the cause. Professor Kelly Miller spoke in a commendatory manner concerning the work and urged the people to direct their attention to the study of their traditions. Mr. R. C. Edmonson suggested that the Association pay more attention to the collection of statistics concerning the race. Mr. John W. Davis asked members to volunteer to secure a larger number of subscribers. He himself submitted a pledge to obtain 25 subscribers during the year.

At the evening session, Dean Benjamin G. Brawley, of Morehouse College, read an excellent paper on *Three Negro Poets: Horton, Mrs. Harper and Whitman*, giving his audience startling information about these literary workers in the days when opportunities were meager. In this way, Dean Brawley successfully bridged the gap between Phyllis Wheatley and Paul Lawrence Dunbar. Professor Kelly Miller then delivered an instructive address on *The Place of Negro History in our Schools*. Professor Miller's discourse was well received and seemed to arouse interest in the study of Negro history. Dr. C. G. Woodson made some remarks concerning the plans of the Association and Dr. J. E. Moorland appealed to the people for their support. Many new members were added. The Association then adjourned.